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A humanities curriculum for students whose formal education ends with high school should guide them to use their minds in careful and thoughtful ways and to develop self-awareness and social identity. At Newton High School (New England), an experimental sophomore curriculum that coordinates and presents history and English in the same classroom in sequential periods attempts to carry out this educational goal. Because subject matter is regarded as the fundamental means of affecting the students' self images, the course emphasizes humanistic content with special weight on man's development within a society and his use of language. Six units varying from eight to 12 periods in length are used: "Man as a Creature with Potential," "The Individual in Society," "Man as Part of a Social Group," "The Individual in the Renaissance World," "Man in a Scientific and Technological World," and a general unit intended to culminate the year's work (objectives, techniques, and materials are suggested for each unit). Although only slight change has been noted in students under the new curriculum, the quantity and quality of questions they ask indicate that the course is beginning to affect their aspirations and self-awareness. Hopefully, this approach and similar projects to be developed in junior and senior courses will help them acquire satisfaction in their work. (LH)

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THE HUMANITIES

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HUMANISTIC EDUCATION FOR THE GENERAL STUDENT: A PROGRESS REPORT

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Newton High School

Lest "armed with the full paraphernalia of our technical civilization, they are more innocent of the resources of the human spirit than a stone age savage, surrounded by spiritual forces strong enough to hold his impulses in check or to direct their course into socially approved channels of war or song." —MARGARET MEAD

"The chief concern of the educator today is to prepare thinkers. His objective is to quicken in all learners the sense of relationships, of present to past and present to future, of individual to group and of individual to the race, which are involved in belonging to humanity."—KIMMIS HENDRICK paraphrasing FREDERICK MAYER

HERE is the threat and the challenge which lies behind our thinking as we have planned this program. It developed, as such programs usually do, out of a specific need in the school.

In September, 1962, we were asked by the administration of Newton High School to share a class of general students coming into their sophomore year. What had once been a rigorous course in English and history for the commercial student had gradually been watered down to accommodate a new type of terminal pupil who went through school. But there wasn't much left of school, aside from the discipline, grades, and routine, to go through him. Our housemaster suggested that coordinating the two subjects and teaching them in the same room in sequential periods might help us evolve a more realistic and meaningful program for today's terminal pupil. The English department suggested incorporating new studies in language; the history department, the meaning of critical experiences in the human record. But fundamentally they left the matter to us. We did our best in the 1962-63 school year to think, talk, plan, and teach such a course as part of our regular work load. Somehow we, the youngsters, and the course made it to June. By then, we knew several things. This was the most enjoyable lower track class either of us had ever taught. The youngsters had gained something more than they had from our traditional offering, but much of the material we had prepared had to be thrown out or revised. We needed to know more about the type of student in these classes, and both of us needed time to work on the problem of giving the school day positive meaning for the reluctant unacademic learner.

We were given three weeks in the summer of 1963 to do some of the job. In the school year 1963-64 we again shared one sophomore class and Mr. Martin shared a second class with another English teacher. The administration had given us a reduced work load and their hearty endorsement to continue the program through the senior year. The second time round we felt we knew more about the students we were dealing with and had a course of study which made some sense to us and to our students. We have too long neglected these pupils' needs and offer our work in progress as a first tentative step.

The Students*

There is considerable variety and individuality among the youngsters. They are almost exclusively from the lowest socio-economic group in the community. By and large, their failure in school work is due to low motivation and aspiration, specific disabilities in reading and writing, and emotional difficulties. Some are relatively bright. They make up the majority of serious discipline problems and a high proportion of psychological disturbance unrelated to discipline.

Originally their track was a business major offered to girls like Jane, who knew what they wanted in life: essentially a good secretarial job and early marriage. The boys, if there were any in the class, wanted to go into business or accounting. Such pupils wanted high school to train them for work. They came with a record of achievement and motivation to justify their desires. The other type of pupil, whose pre-high school years showed failure through lack of ability or effort, left school and found a job or went into the service. As a high school diploma has become a prerequisite for all employment and a college degree a prerequisite for most business careers, we find both the unrealistic business major and the reluctant learner in the same track. The common denominator is their frustration and alienation.

And what after high school, the end of their formal "education"? When the girls graduate they will probably seek early marriage, holding in the meantime jobs as car hops, waitresses, super market checkout girls, beauticians, and secretaries. The boys will enlist in the armed services or get jobs as unskilled factory hands, construction workers, super market stock boys,

* The complete report includes significant sketches of eleven of the students in the course.

and gas station attendants. Inevitably they face a shorter work week than ever before. Furthermore, as automation displaces unskilled labor, this type of individual is affected first. He leaves school with little education or training and is the first to become unemployable, the last to use his resources during his enforced leisure.

But the picture is not totally discouraging. These boys and girls have emotional and intellectual potential. The job of education is to help the individual see his potential, respect it, and develop it. We have no illusions about the awesomeness of this task and about the socio-economic and psychological forces which mould the self-image, but here is the threat and the challenge. We do not propose to help these pupils develop their potential so that we may then impose middle-class aspirations upon them. In this course we have seen their potential—for good and for bad—as exciting and varied as that of the college bound student, although it may differ in intensity and depth. This pupil can be intellectually creative and imaginative. He can use his mind in a careful and thoughtful way. He can be held to certain academic standards. But he needs psychological help, pride in real achievement, and intellectual content. We regard a humanistic education as essential to these pupils' greatest needs: self-awareness and social identity.

Course of Study

The student's first problem is to orient himself to a new combined history-English program. We begin immediately with two short stories that obliquely distinguish man from other animals. In reading and discussing these stories, the pupil sees history as the study of man's becoming within a society and English as the study of man's becoming through his most characteristic activity, language. In history then, the pupil will be using his native language, English, to think, read, talk, and write of man's experiences. Which have been the most significant in the development of history? How has the individual participated in these experiences? And why have they been significant? In English he will be thinking, reading, talking, and writing not only about man's general experiences throughout history but particularly about man's experiences in language. What is the nature of language? How may he best use it to record his experiences? How may he best share the experiences of others in literature?

Unit I—Man As a Creature with Potential
(Time: six to seven weeks)*

General Objectives

In the first unit we explore the idea of man as a creature with potential and the implications of this idea. In contrast with other animals who always *are,* man can *become* something other than what he is. This he accomplishes by the use of his hand and his brain. There is constant interaction between man's potential and his environment. Man's attempt to deal with his environment (i.e., to observe, to explain, to use, and control) resulted in his invention of tools, language, and myth. We "know" what man was like by applying inductive and deductive reasoning to whatever evidence is available. Modern myth and modern science are further evidence of the interaction between man's potential and his environment. This unit establishes the tone and direction of the year's work. We want to get the student thinking about what it means to be human.

Explication

Part 1: The pupil reads stories like "The Far-Sighted Cat," "Lassie Come Home," and "The Peacelike Mongoose," which enable him to differentiate between animal and human behavior. Such stories inevitably deal with sentiment and sentimentality. He compares the text and the TV film of Lassie to see how the TV version has changed sentiment to sentimentality; he examines human interest stories in the daily newspaper. The pupil's awareness of the difference will broaden and deepen throughout his high school years. In Helen Keller's "Three Days to See" he again evaluates the appeal to sentiment. But he also sees the classic example in our time of a human being who would not live on the animal level to which she seemed doomed—who "became"—and became a part of history. Her three days give the student a panorama of man's record of achievement which we call history and alert him to the price and privilege of what we call being human.

Part 2: Films like *The Hunters* and *Nanook of the North* show man coping with his environment through his use of tools. With each invention (tool, language, myth) the student hypoth-

* The class meets for 50-minute periods, four for English and four for history per week. Parts of each unit vary from eight to twelve periods.

esizes and creates anew. He figures out how primitive man made the tool by making one himself. Using only the natural resources in the vicinity of the school, boys make (and occasionally invent or discover) weapons and agricultural tools; girls, domestic implements and clothing. Having himself faced the challenge to his own resourcefulness, he sees how man devised tools to meet the physical necessities of his environment. In filmstrips the pupil sees the tools man developed as he moved from food-gatherer to food-producer; the relationship between the environment and the invention of each tool becomes clear. The pupil, in order to discover this relationship for himself, concentrates on a clear, inductive description of the tool, on a hypothesis as to what enabled man to make it, and on the significance of the tool to man's future development. These activities, in turn, force the pupil to validate his hypotheses on the bases of evidence.

For example, one of the readings deals with an archeologist's discovery in a collapsed cave of the remains of a stone age community. One of the victims of the landslide is noteworthy in that he has buck teeth and is missing an arm. The archeologist states that the man probably had his arm mutilated in a fight with a bear, and some stone-age doctor had to amputate the arm. The archeologist concludes that when the man could not hunt, he used his teeth and his one good arm to make tools.

The pupils take the same evidence that the archeologist has found, but they suggest other possible hypotheses. For example, one pupil asked, "Couldn't the landslide have caused the amputation?" But immediately another pupil asked, "Then why wasn't the other arm found?" Another one wanted to know, "Then why did the archeologist call it an amputation? It must have been an old wound!" Another pupil hypothesized that the arm had been severed not by a stone age doctor but by a stone age warrior. Similarly they make counter-hypotheses as to whether this man was a tool maker and in particular whether he had to use his teeth to hold his working implements.

Part 3: But the student does not isolate man. Again the contrast between man and beast is heightened when the pupil looks at man as a maker of tools of expression, of those tools necessary for communal life and for transmission of a tradition: language, art, writing. He begins to hypothesize, as he had with earlier tools, about how man made language. As he manipulates the tool in history class, he begins to examine language in his Eng-

lish class to see for himself that it is an oral, conventional system of symbols. Here he leaves behind the concrete (the visible hand with its thumb, the tangible tool) and begins to cope with the abstract (the mental capacity for encoding and decoding and the utterance which can never truly be recalled for examination). The difference between words and things is inescapable when he tries to invent a simple language or modify one. In a film like *The Alphabet Conspiracy* he sees how varied communication has been and still is, what language fundamentally is, and how it differs from animal communication. He also sees how spoken and written languages have different resources and therefore require different abilities as he makes sounds, draws pictures, writes letters of the alphabet, spells words, and composes sentences. From here on, his knowledge of the system called English must deepen rather than become more arbitrary and distant. If this pupil can deal with ideas, he can deal with ideas about language.

In history class meanwhile he applies his knowledge of language to Egyptian writing in its various stages. He recognizes the relation between word and ideogram in *Mother* (*in Hieroglyphicks*) and composes simple rebuses. He soon finds that representation becomes a problem when his ideas grow complex. As he devises his own picture writing for some of the following sentences, he sees the power of the ideogram and of the abstract, arbitrary, conventional symbol. He sees the connection between the *visual* symbol and the *phonetic* symbol.

The bird is in the tree.
I think I see a bird.
The bird is pretty.
I think I see a pretty bird in the tree.
I saw the bird.
The bird saw me.
I think the bird saw me, etc.

If there is sufficient interest (if other languages are heard in the home, or if there is curiosity about languages of people in the headlines [Russians, Vietnamese, etc.]) we look at their writing systems briefly.

To begin a study of the Egyptian view of the world the pupil learns to read the language of cartography by examining maps of the ancient Near East and drawing one of the Nile River valley. Although his first attempts are primitive, they lay the

foundation for continuous and more sophisticated work with maps.

Part 4: The pupil is involved not only with his own hypotheses and creations but also with those of historic man. He reads myths of various cultures which try to account for man's invention of language, for the creation of the universe (Hebrew, Sumerian, Egyptian) and his survival of the flood (Hebrew, Sumerian). As he reads these records of man's efforts to understand the world around him, he sees how geography shapes myth, particularly how the Nile affected Egypt's cosmogeny. He also sees the relationship between myth and religion: how man develops religious beliefs as he tries to order the world about him. Egyptian myth and art reveal the crucial role of religion in Egyptian life. Now he reads myths of many lands, writes his own, footnoting his hypothesis with a scientific explanation (for example, why the leaves turn red or how he caught cold over the weekend). He writes his first special report of the year on a myth of his choice. He retells it in his own words, lists the hypotheses made by the myth-maker, tries to explain and evaluate each.

Part 5: For the rest of the unit, the teacher chooses his area of special emphasis. He may, for example, consider modern myth, modern science, or problems man confronts in today's environment. Two very readable stories for reexamining all that we have said about man as a creature with potential are Steinbeck's *The Pearl* and O'Flaherty's "Two Lovely Beasts."

Unit II—The Individual in Society
(Time: six weeks)

General Objectives

Having explored the notion of man as a becoming creature, in unit two we see man in the context of society. The emphasis shifts from man the maker of tools, language, and myth in a physical setting to the individual confronting his social environment. We deal with individuals in selected societies in the ancient world: with those men and women who were recognized in their times and are still remembered in ours for their deeds, famous and infamous. We explore the various influences of the group upon the choices and possibilities open to a man in that society. What were the controls, the freedoms, the responsibilities, the directions various ancient societies gave their members? We see societies producing the rebel as well as the conformist.

We consider what it meant to achieve manhood and heroism in these societies and what it means in today's world. Here the student confronts ideas which hopefully can make him reflect deeply on the individual human condition.

Explication

Part 1: The student reads a simplified translation of the *Iliad*. This version remains faithful to the original yet isolates only the main incidents of the story: the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon, Agamemnon's dream, Patrolus's fight with Hector, the duel between Achilles and Hector, and so forth. The illustrations in this edition give the pupil a foretaste of what he will see in the museum, especially among the Greek vase paintings.

The *Iliad* is still not easy for these students. A particular stumbling block is names of people and gods, all of whom need to be recognizable for their essential attributes. These pupils balk at jawbreakers like *Clytemnestra* or *Agamemnon* only until they see that spelling and pronouncing these names involve less trial and error than our everyday words like *sometimes* or *misled*. The pupil also needs help with close reading. Reading aloud in class by both teacher and those students who are willing is another way to bring text and pupil together.

This is the time when we establish the Thorndike-Barnhart Dictionary as the basic language text for these pupils. The pronunciation key, etymologies, definitions, synonymies, parts of speech, illustrations, citations, and type satisfy this pupil's needs —and seem to be a revelation to him. We have said that our primary aim in the sophomore year is to affect the youngster's self-image so that he will want to get help where he needs it most: in the reading which almost invariably is his first taste of school failure. Remedial reading, like other therapy, succeeds when the pupil cooperates. We do not impose another dose of remedial reading, but dictionary work does much for the pupil who needs help with phonics and word study as he learns to *use* a dictionary intelligently. We keep a complete set in the classroom and find ourselves using it almost daily in the course of our work—especially in this unit. Whereas Unit One stressed close observation and critical thinking as key activities in this course, Unit Two stresses the importance of word study and close reading—at least for the next three years.

At the outset the student is told mythical stories of how the

war came about: the golden apple of Discord, the judgment of Paris, and the abduction of Helen. Here he is asked not only to recall the myths he has studied in the previous unit, but also to discover whether in these myths there is any historical basis. By comparing maps of Homer's world and the world as it was and by discussing the intertribal warfare of archaic Greece, the student forms some historical hypotheses about the causes of the war. Moving into the story itself, the student confronts the individual in early Greek society: the war heroes Achilles and Hector striving for physical and military excellence and their attendent material and intrinsic rewards—two very different men reacting to and reflecting the society and time in which they live. The student begins by writing simple descriptions based upon careful observation of these men. Then he compares and contrasts them in paragraphs and in class discussions. He studies their actions and motives, debates who was the greater hero, and considers whether such men exist in the contemporary world.

Among Homer's men mingle the gods—human except for their physical excellence and immortality. The comparison between Greek myth and Egyptian myth enables the student to see the different position individuals held in these societies. It also clarifies the Homeric and Egyptian concepts of life and death and man's position in the universe. In sum, the student should begin to understand Homer's world. He should also get a fairly sophisticated picture of Homer's heroes and their position in their society—how they worked within its bounds to achieve greatness and suffer defeat. He can then compare this world with ours, in order to think about our standards of achievement and excellence.

Part 2: After this careful look at Homer's heroes and ourselves, the student reads a description of the Lycurgan system. Here is a society geared to producing an Achilles or a Hector, but with some very important differences. The pupil continues to compare and contrast the relationship between society and the individual in Sparta, Homeric Greece, and our world. Herodotus's account of Leonidas and the three hundred at Thermopylae provides the specific example of the individual who fulfills the Spartan ideal. Questions and discussions of the *Iliad* and the *History* lead to the more challenging question of whether Leonidas was an individual or even a hero, in view of the society from which he came.

Part 3: In class the student sees slides of fifth century Athenian art and reads Pericles's Funeral Oration. As he did with Egyptian art, the student simply describes the details of what he sees. Then he is asked to hypothesize about what kind of society would have produced this art. Once some general notions have been worked out, we read together carefully the Funeral Oration, thus making the notions more explicit. Here is society with ideals more complex than those of the Homeric or the Spartan world. Film strips on Athenian life help the pupil understand the differences. Socrates, a rebel who grew out of Athenian society, serves as the specific example. The student reads a simple one-page biography designed to sharpen his note-taking. He starts to build words from common Greek roots in the selection. With the help of detailed worksheets, he reads I. A. Richards' basic English translation of the *Apology* and sections of the *Crito*. The student must read carefully, concentrating on the action of the trial, conviction and execution. Finally, the student is asked whether Socrates was a product of his society, whether his trial and conviction seem justified, whether Socrates was a hero, and in what sense, compared to the other heroes studied.

As a review of the first two units we visit the Museum of Fine Arts. The sections of particular concern are Egyptian and Greek statuary, Egyptian funerary objects illustrating daily life, and Greek vase paintings depicting the Trojan War and various other myths. We tour in small groups in order to encourage the pupil to linger, observe, and question.

Part 4: The teacher has the choice in this part of taking up any number of subjects related to the general objectives of the unit. For example, a modern eulogy, recalling the epitaph of the Spartan three-hundred and Pericles's Funeral Oration, could bring the students to consider what our society calls manly or heroic. Or sections from *Child of Our Time* could show the student the kind of heroism which emerges from a concentration camp. Anouilh's *Antigone* or personalities in the daily headlines could be used for similar discussion.

Unit III—Man as Part of a Social Group
(Time: six weeks)

General Objectives

In this unit on social status in feudal Europe we look at the individual within a social group. The knight and his lady are

our most vivid representatives. The feudal peasant and the monk contrast with the courtly tradition. We see the strong pull of paganism and Christianity in feudal society as well as the system of wordly obligations which was fundamental to the chivalric ideal. Nor do we ignore the difference between the chivalric code and its actual practice. As we look at feudal man, we note not only his function in his own time and class but also the transmission of his ideals to our own society and their inevitable changes. What do *lady* and *gentleman* signify to society? What should they signify to humanity? As part of this consideration we study etiquette in language: what we mean by correct and incorrect, good and bad, and varieties and levels of usage. Throughout this unit we hope the student sees more clearly the realities of social status and appreciates more deeply the dignity of the individual in any social group.

Explication

Part 1: After the contemporary or classical hero of Unit Two, we meet a heroine, Eliza Doolittle. In this remarkable guttersnipe's story lie all of the questions implicit in this unit. Why does she want to be a lady—only to discover she's been a lady all along? And why does her loving pater lament being catapulted into middle-class respectability? Where did we get this concern with the lady and the gentleman? And what do we mean by these terms today?

Eliza's cockney may seem formidable on the printed page, but the dramatic reading, and if possible, a performance of *My Fair Lady,* helps the pupil understand society's concern with outward status symbols: speech, manners, dress, grooming, occupation. As the students see Eliza's struggle and evolving self-awareness, their own clichés and prejudices about social position give way to the facts of language change and variety (social, regional, and temporal) inherent in the play. They test their generalizations against the varieties of usage in their own environment.

Part 2: A film like *The Medieval Manor* or *The Medieval World* takes the pupil back to feudal Europe. In stories like "Gawain and the Green Knight," in a few sonnets of Petrarch, in a prayer to the Virgin, in the wording of the accolade, in Chaucer's motley pilgrims, the pupil begins to understand the medieval mind and temperament: the clash between the chivalric code and its practice; the political, religious, and social

role of the upper class within the general milieu. In the Knight he sees the glorification of Lord, sword, and lady.

Slides of the unicorn tapestries, of parts of a bestiary and of a book of hours bring the Middle Ages to life. Vuegraph transparencies with overlays enable the pupil to understand much of Chaucer in the original Middle English. He sees the text, he hears the spoken word, he looks at the picture to check his linguistic hunches. By examining the language in a brief passage, like the introduction to the young Squire, the pupil notes how English has changed in sound, inflection, word order, and vocabulary. The pupils enjoy this. The language is different enough from their own to give them a sense of translation, of dealing with a foreign tongue. Yet it is similar enough to their English to enable them to make intelligent guesses and to laugh off perfectly reasonable analogies that just don't fit, like the gallant Squire's "floyting al the day."

Part 3: The function, ideals, and influence of peasant Bodo and his wife Ermentrude contrast with those of the Knight and his lady. On a large map the pupil chooses the best locations for the parts of the manor of Bodo's lord: the monastery, the steward's home, the church, the artisans' shops, the huts of the serfs and peasants. Here the pupil realizes the agricultural foundations of feudalism and the function of the peasant in this economic order. Bodo's daily existence becomes the subject of conjecture. How are his prayers and charms related to the pagan and the Christian world of which he is a part? Is Bodo a gentleman? Is Ermentrude a lady? Here the problems of definition confront the pupil irrevocably. Definition of mere objects and tools in unit one proved demanding; definition of abstractions like *lady* and *gentleman* require even more careful explication if our debate is to move in any direction.

Part 4: The ideal of the holy man and the corruption of that ideal emerge as we read the Benedictine Rules, as we meet Chaucer's Nun and Pardoner, as we read "The Pardoner's Tale." Recordings of liturgical music and slides of monasteries reveal the powerful force of Christianity.

Throughout the unit the pupil's imagination is challenged—first in a negative way when he scoffs at the impossibilities in the Gawain story—only to be confronted with some of the marvels of modern surgery. Yesterday's magic becomes today's science but neither could have come to pass without imagination. The pupil applies his imagination to a very simple exem-

plum, "The Pardoner's Tale," when he is asked to figure out another reasonable conclusion to this story, and to write this alternative story. Here the problems of inevitability and respect for the imagination rather than fancy show the pupil the place of real and unreal, the relationship between story and myth, exemplum and fable.

Part 5: We look at rules of modern etiquette (including school rules) and discuss their antecedents in the medieval tradition. We also consider how modern society has changed the ideals. The teacher can do any number of things to bring the unit into contemporary focus. The quickest would be to read a story like "Sixteen" and let the pupils decide whether the narrator is a lady and the boy a gentleman. Another way might be to observe the breakdown of the feudal system in the Guinevere story (in the musical *Camelot* if possible) or to consider the attempts to retain the chivalric ideal in "A Rose for Emily" or in *The Glass Menagerie.* The anti-gentleman could be studied in films like *School for Scoundrels* or *Lavender Hill Mob.* Throughout the unit we see the relationship between language and character, whether of the group or the individual.

Unit IV—The Individual in the Renaissance World
(Time: eight weeks)

General Objectives

The fourth unit shifts from the previous concern with social status, lady and gentleman, to the seemingly unbounded humanistic individual of the Renaissance. In studying a few Renaissance men in art, religion, politics, science, and literature, we consider the breakdown of the old order and the coming of the new Europe. The variety of these men's experiences suggests the fulfillment of the creature with potential. Not only does he have the potential; he is now aware of it. His society condones and glorifies the individual free from the restraints of the medieval world. But on closer study we see that many of the elements of the old persist. Despite his new-found freedom, the Renaissance man is involved in the potentials and restraints of the new science and technology, the nation-state, the city, and the Reformation. The modern attitude presents modern problems. This unit should pull many of the ideas of the first three units together, putting them into a new context, and preparing for an understanding of the complexities of our own world and

times. Hopefully, the student's insight into the individual's position in a complex society is deepened.

Explication

Part 1: After a chapter from Mill's *The Middle Ages* and a film on the Crusades, the student constructs a hypothetical plan of a late medieval city. He compares this plan with the one he drew for the manor in unit three and discusses what changes have taken place: first simple physical changes, then the more complex economic ones. After reading selections from *Don Quixote,* he considers whether this knight errant is a hero, why Don Quixote fails as a medieval knight, and why he is an absurd Renaissance figure. These discussions lead the pupil to see there is more than a physical change to the Renaissance; it is also a complex change in attitude.

Slides and filmstrips juxtapose medieval and Renaissance art. The pupils note the characteristics of each age and discuss the new elements of Renaissance art: perspective, color, detailed background, concern with the body. Then a slide-tape takes them on a tour of Florence, where they can now isolate the medieval and Renaissance elements in a modern city. The consideration of art enables the student to observe concretely the shift in attitude from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. An E.B.F. film on the Renaissance reviews the change in music and the visual arts. While watching the film the student again has to observe detail—this time especially of music—in order to discuss the differences. Observation is only the first step; the pupil considers how and why these change came about. And he sees how much of Chaucer, Petrarch, Dante, and Giotto are part medieval, part Renaissance. "The artists are the antennae of the race!"

Part 2: Beginning with the artists Leonardo and Cellini, we study a series of Renaissance men. We read short biographies, see their art work, and consider what makes each a Renaissance man. On his own, the pupil writes a report on a Renaissance artist of his own choice, using as a model for analysis the class's report on Leonardo. He moves from the painter or sculptor to a variety of men: Castiglione, della Casa, Aretino, Shakespeare, the Duke of Urbino, each time reading a short biography and, when possible, some of the individual's actual work. Always he considers the nature of biography and these men's part in what we call the Renaissance world. We look for the most readable

translations from foreign languages. We do not use simplified or modernized adaptations of English works.

Parts 3, 4, and 5 in English are devoted to the study of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* as a Renaissance play taking place in an Italian Renaissance city. The transition may be made through myth, medieval story, or Renaissance city. Much of the play is acted out before the pupils and Shakespeare's English is contrasted with Chaucer's and our own. If possible, we see *West Side Story*. But no matter what the approach, we inevitably face the problems of whether the characters in the play—the Prince, the friar, the parents, the lovers—fulfill their Renaissance roles. We also consider the inevitability of the end, which leads us to problems of motive and structure in the play.

Part 3: In history the student studies the discovery of the world. He understands from Columbus's journal and from medieval and Renaissance maps how the physical view of the world has changed and brought contact with unfamiliar cultures. He sees in Leonardo's notebooks the beginnings of the new science and mechanics. In Galileo's astronomy he sees how the new view of the universe conflicts with the views supported by the church.

Part 4: In history the student moves to a consideration of the conflict within the church, which brought about the Reformation. Luther's protest is another illustration of the Renaissance mind and spirit. Again, lest we establish misleading dichotomies, we take the pupils back to the now familiar square in Florence, where Savonarola's earlier questioning and protest anticipate the Renaissance attitude.

Part 5: In history the student reads short paragraphs from Machiavelli's *The Prince*. From the readings he gets ideas for drawing political cartoons that the class can see on the screen. He discusses the politics of power and the rising nation-state in the Renaissance picture. He considers Shakespeare's prince in *Romeo and Juliet* to see whether he is Machiavellian. If he is, how should he treat the strife-torn Verona? In the end, who should "be pardon'd, who punished?"

Part 6: History and English classes both direct themselves to making a Renaissance daily paper. The local news is the news of each day's happenings in Romeo and Juliet's Verona.

The international news deals with events of the Reformation or the discovery of the New World. Other items are an editorial,

a political cartoon based on Machiavelli, a "What's New in Art" column or "New Inventions of the Day," a Dear Abbey column based on the advice of Castiglione or della Casa and so forth. The possibilities for the paper are unlimited: society page, rotogravure, advertisements, sports, and obituary column enlist any and all interests and abilities. The students work in groups or individually, research, create, and pull together all that they have studied about the Renaissance world and its attitude.

Unit V—Man in a Scientific and Technological World
(Time: six to eight weeks)

General Objectives

Unit five emphasizes one of the chief accomplishments and chief problems of man in the modern world: science and technology. The humanistic worldly individual of the Renaissance discovers the powers and possibilities of the natural world and methods of dealing with it, only to discover also that the more he invents and discovers, the more he depends on these inventions and discoveries. The craftsman of the Renaissance finds he is losing his position of responsibility and power to the greater power of technology. Moreover, industrialism and the new commercial order bring the city into being. In this modern city the new technology provides comfort, but it also creates a community with chronic problems. As men view these events, some glorify, others protest what is happening. They are confronted with how to use what has been created for man's benefit rather than his harm. We hope the students will get an awareness of the complexity of the problem and see their potential for personally coping with it.

Explication

Part 1: As transition from the previous unit, the student reads two or three biographical selections, including Cellini's description of his Jupiter; also the short stories "Quality" and "The Coppersmith." At first the pupils resent the Renaissance craftsman's praise of his own creation, but with further discussion they discover the difference between conceit and legitimate pride in craftsmanship. In each of the stories the student meets a craftsman who no longer fits into his society because the new science and technology have taken over or eliminated his work. Reading, writing, and discussion are supplemented

by careful examination of hand-crafted and machine-made articles. Pupils also bring examples of their own handiwork.

Part 2: In history the student reads several short descriptions of inventions since the fifteenth century. He considers how these inventions affect man's life. He also recalls Leonardo and Galileo, Renaissance forerunners of modern science and technology. In science fiction and the pupil's invention of some futuristic machine, he considers what are the limits of our use of machines. The most able pupils write short science fiction pieces. As the sharp distinctions between story and myth were observed in unit one, so are they here noted for fiction and science fiction. It is the essential differences that are noted and insisted upon in the pupil's creation.

In English we examine our language scientifically, i.e., we set aside all notions of social usage and concern ourselves with the structure of the sentence, the unit of thought. Grammar does not improve usage, a function of socio-economic background. We try to develop in the student a respect for his current usage and a desire to enlarge and vary his usage, to work toward adult sentences. In unit three the pupil got some understanding of the facts of usage: of the difference between good and bad and correct and incorrect English. Change in his writing and speech habits can come only through imitation, practice, and repetition of standard speech patterns. The pupil is held to a reasonable standard throughout the school day.

But in stressing the development of curiosity and thought in these pupils, we have been experimenting with more than conventions in language; we have been trying to find out how much the pupil can master of the nature of language itself, part of a humanistic education. Having learned something of hypothesizing in mythmaking, of inductive and deductive reasoning in unit one, we now apply scientific method to the study of the English sentence. This work in grammar comes frequently and in small doses throughout the rest of the year. The pupil applies his intuitive knowledge of sentence composing to discover for himself and verbalize some of the underlying rules of the system. Starting with the simple sentence, we work out rules for the simplest of transformations. These pupils find great satisfaction in hypothesizing a rule and seeing if it works in sentences the class writes based on the rule. When it works, we feel fortified; when it doesn't work, we try to discover our error. More often, we realize that we are not in error but that we are

confronting the richness and complexity of English and the tentativeness and partiality of scientific theory. The important thing is not that the pupil gets all the facts of language (Who has them, anyway?) but that his questions are sound and purposeful. *Why* and *what would happen if* are the key questions in this unit on science and technology. If there are any practical applications of such knowledge, if the pupils begin to write more mature and correct sentences, so much the better. But we do not confuse using language with knowing it: science has shown us the difference between the two.

Part 3: Here the students study the origin of a modern city as one of the outcomes of the new science and technology and of their effect upon the economy. The growth of London from the sixteenth through the eighteenth century is the example. They read descriptions of this city in poetry and prose, examine maps, see slides of Hogarth, together with examples of the reaction in Watteau. As the students observe details, they formulate generalizations about the nature of the city and relate to other communities they have studied: tribe, polis, manor. How has technology affected the city and the city dweller?

Part 4: Man is now a member of an industrial urban society. What does he think of it? The pupil reads examples of the praise and protest, from Owen's Utopian schemes to Zola's naturalistic exposé, from Whitman's salute to the muse "installed amid the kitchenware," to Marx and Engels's scheme. The pupils have to take a stand in all this praise and protest. Who makes the most sense? Finally they read "Fawn with a Bit of Green" to see one modern reaction to our industrial urban society.

Part 5: The contemporary section deals with the city of Newton. Students take a trip to a local factory, where they can see both handcrafted and mass-produced stages of the final product. They study the industrial development of one section of the city, and few even get the reaction of the involved and uninvolved citizens to this development.

Unit VI

(Time: four to six weeks)

Unit six culminates the year's work. The teacher is free to develop those concepts or skills that seem to require more time than the first five units permitted or to explore in depth the work that the pupils found most stimulating. At this time of

year the teacher's and class's specific interests and enthusiasms are the strongest antidote to spring fever with its attendant straining at the tether and work stoppage. The best way seems to be fairly rapid reading of several full-length books. Pupils enjoy the contrast to the rather heavy dosage of short readings they have had thus far; they are now in a stronger position to read a book. The important thing is to tie together the concepts of the previous units through these final readings. *Animal Farm* provides a good way of looking at the Marxist reaction to industrial capitalism and at man's attempt to achieve the utopian ideal. *The Human Comedy* presents few reading difficulties; yet it takes the class back to Homer's Helen and Ulysses, to Ithaca; into the midsts of the family's problems of survival and endurance in an urban, war-torn world. *The Little World of Don Camillo* enables us to laugh and to look seriously at man in society, at authority and the individual in today's world. The teacher has any number of options in this unit. We know that these three books work with these classes. We should like to hear of other titles that might work well.

Tentative Conclusions

We are expanding this program cautiously beyond the sophomore year. Other teachers are now participating in the designing and teaching of the junior and senior courses. Our general plan is to teach the combined program to one class the first year, to two classes including another pair of teachers the next year, and eventually to offer the program to all pupils in the non-academic course. Consequently, we do not envisage the full operation of this program until 1968.

We have called this a humanistic curriculum because we do not believe a single humanities course or program can do all we have set out to do. It can only begin. Next year we hope to enlist the talents of mathematics, science, physical education, art, and music teachers whose course offerings will enrich our current program for these students. We look forward to the time when the whole school day will add up to something significant to these pupils. Nor are we ignoring their need for some vocational training. The new high school plant should be in operation when we are ready to reexamine our total academic offerings, to scrap those that have not worked, and to enable the pupils to take advantage of some of the work-training programs the community should offer for some part of the school day.

We regard substance as the fundamental means of affecting these pupils' self-image, and we know that the relationship between teacher and pupil is crucial because of the demands of the content. A very pressing need we have felt in the past two years is for a more encompassing program, one that reaches these pupils and their home environments. Communication between home and school is essential for these pupils. Yet theirs are the parents hardest to reach. The present work load of our guidance counselors does not permit the extra time and help these pupils need. This is why we feel a social worker with a rich background in dealing with adolescent problems is a key person. We hope to enlist the services of a social worker this year and to get more attention for these pupils from the guidance department. We also need better communication between counselor, social worker, administrator, and teacher.

At times during the year we have had individual students with such serious emotional problems that they cannot carry on in a classroom situation. For the class's sake, as well as theirs, we would like such a pupil to be removed from the class and to be tutored during these varied periods of stress. The tutor has to be an experienced, understanding teacher who can use our materials. When the student is ready to return, he will be ready to fit more easily into the course and the class.

A special counselor assigned to these pupils would also serve the pressing need of establishing and using valid aptitude, achievement, and psychological tests. Most of the ones we now use are culture-bound; they cannot help discriminating socially against these pupils. Such tests usually relegate these pupils to epithets like: has a short attention span; likes routine; has little creativity, self-direction, or leadership; learns by drill; has limited vocabulary; is baffled by association and generalization; lacks reading ability and curiosity about language; is not interested in the *why;* dislikes abstractions and fine distinctions; fails to distinguish between fact and opinion; cannot be very self-critical or tolerate ideas different from his own; enjoys group activity only when his role is clearly defined; "may do acceptable written work if instruction has been thorough and he has seen numerous examples; does not see deeper significance of a story." (Adapted from W. Myres' "Identifying Students of Superior and Low Ability" in the October, 1960, *English Journal.*) Such judgments tell us what we have done to and for these pupils; but they do not begin to tell us what might

and must be done if we are to educate them as human beings.

We have therefore avoided references to statistics as to I.Q. and achievement found in most pupils' folders. These figures only confirm what we already know about the culturally deprived in our society. Until we have more reliable guides as to the potential of this pupil, we assume that excellence—in course content, teaching, and guidance—can do no child any harm. But we must agree on what we call *excellence*. In this paper we have tried to define excellence in our two disciplines. Guidance is not our province. But we can only suggest some of the basic needs lest we aggravate these pupils' deprivation and helplessly see school and society involved in the most costly repair.

Actually, our course grew out of abandoning all preconceived notions about these pupils and asking ourselves what we would ask for any student, realizing that the answers we got had to be relative.

1. Can he be objective?
   Can he develop taste in art and literature?
   Can he be a detached spectator, reader and listener?
   How far can his critical thinking skills go?
   How complicated an idea can he cope with?
   Can he transfer an idea to new areas of study?
2. Can he achieve intellectual autonomy as a result of this transfer?
3. Can he move from a concern with himself to a concern with others?
   Can he move from a concern with the immediate to a concern with the timeless?
   Can he see when he is moving from private to universal concerns?
   Does he value this kind of experience?
4. Can he develop introspection and perspective?
   Can his imagination be aroused?
   Can he transmute as well as transmit our culture?
5. What are the optimum time sequences for his work?
6. What uses of nonverbal material are most conducive to transmission of ideas?
   What technical aspects (maps, charts, slides, films, statistics) are useful?

7. How can his reading and listening skills be sharpened? Can he and should he study grammar? What goals of expression, written and oral, seem reasonable?
8. What extra classroom experiences are most conducive to a transmission of ideas?
9. What are the emotional and other psychological characteristics of these pupils?

Our tentative answers are reflected in this program. The course starts with content, with a concern for the disciplines of history and English. It assumes that these disciplines studied together offer the general student more than the traditional separation in a high school curriculum. In such a combined course based on only the best literature, art and music, the student confronts similar ideas from different angles and, we hope, as a result is better able to understand and study the ideas in depth. He can better grasp their essential relevance to human experience. The student can also acquire reading, writing, thinking, and speaking skills in a more consistent and concentrated manner and be held to a single standard of recognizable excellence. Although the course takes the student in the same direction in both English and history, the essential uniqueness and variety of the disciplines is preserved. The course makes strenuous demands on the student; but if he accepts them, he sees the satisfaction that it brings.

The demands on the teacher are no less strenuous. Emotionally, these pupils drain him. Academically, they offer few returns. His only satisfaction is exploring ideas and feelings that deeply concern and affect both pupil and teacher as human beings.

How do we know what the student learns from the course? Term tests and final exams are not grim, but they are rigorous. They tell us whether the pupil has anything to say, whether his vocabulary is adequate for the saying, whether his imagination and intellect have in any way been aroused. Our best proof, however, is from experiences in class. Most important are the questions the student begins to ask us. We always have our questions ready, but often the pupil's correct answer matters less than his thoughtful question. Their frequency and nature tell us whether he is realizing the aims of the course. If he sees that the ideas we discuss are interesting enough, relevant to

him, thought-provoking, and worth asking questions about, we think he is moving toward our goal. No matter how illiterate he may seem, these questions offer the only promise that he will do more, that he has some incentive. For his questions show when his attitude toward school, education, and himself are changing. Other than hard, serious work, we expect no radical improvement in the sophomore year, only the beginning of the change. We hope the course opens up new possibilities for the pupil as an individual; that it begins to affect his aspirations, taste, attitude, and self-awareness so that eventually he may acquire satisfaction in his work and in his leisure. We are hoping for much but we have no right to strive for less if we really believe what we teach: that, for better or worse, man is a creature with potential. [*Appendices* to this report contain valuable suggestions for the teacher as well as excellent bibliographies.—Editor.]